

Research Paper

## Gender Differences in Happiness, Work-Family Conflict, and Occupational Stress Among School Teachers

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### ABSTRACT

The present study examines gender differences in happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress among higher secondary school teachers. A sample of 100 teachers (50 male, 50 female) from Gondia city was selected using a non-probability purposive sampling method. Standardized psychological scales, including the Happiness Scale (HS-RHMJ, 2017), Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFCS, 2000), and Occupational Stress Inventory – Revised Edition (OSI-R, 1998), were utilized to measure these variables. Data were analyzed using an independent-samples t-test to determine significant gender-based differences. The results revealed that male teachers reported significantly higher levels of happiness ( $M = 269.36$ ,  $SD = 4.67$ ) than female teachers ( $M = 261.45$ ,  $SD = 4.29$ ,  $t(98) = 8.82$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In contrast, female teachers exhibited greater work-family conflict ( $M = 63.45$ ,  $SD = 5.43$ ) compared to males ( $M = 56.78$ ,  $SD = 4.04$ ,  $t(98) = 6.96$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, occupational stress was higher among female teachers ( $M = 435.67$ ,  $SD = 6.10$ ) than their male counterparts ( $M = 424.82$ ,  $SD = 6.88$ ,  $t(98) = 8.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These findings suggest that gender plays a crucial role in shaping occupational experiences, with female teachers facing greater challenges in work-life balance and job-related stress. The study underscores the need for gender-sensitive policies, workplace flexibility, and stress management interventions to improve teacher well-being.

**Keywords:** Gender differences, happiness, work-family conflict, occupational stress, school teachers, psychological well-being, work-life balance

Work and family are two fundamental aspects of an individual's life, and the balance between them significantly impacts overall well-being. School teachers, in particular, face unique occupational challenges that may influence their levels of happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress. The intersection of gender with these factors has drawn considerable scholarly interest, as societal expectations, cultural norms, and biological differences contribute to variations in experiences and coping mechanisms. The role of gender in shaping happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress is crucial in understanding teachers' well-being and their professional effectiveness.

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## **Gender Differences in Happiness, Work-Family Conflict, and Occupational Stress Among School Teachers**

Happiness is a multidimensional concept encompassing emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Among school teachers, happiness is linked to job satisfaction, personal accomplishments, and work-life balance. Research suggests that gender differences exist in happiness levels due to varying social roles and expectations. Women, often burdened with greater domestic responsibilities, may experience lower levels of happiness compared to men due to work-family conflict. Conversely, female teachers may also derive greater satisfaction from the relational aspects of teaching, enhancing their sense of well-being.

Work-family conflict arises when the demands of professional and personal life become incompatible, leading to stress and reduced effectiveness in both domains. Teachers, particularly those with families, often struggle to balance classroom responsibilities with household duties. Gender differences in work-family conflict are well-documented, with female teachers generally facing higher levels of conflict due to their dual roles as caregivers and professionals. This conflict can lead to burnout, dissatisfaction, and emotional exhaustion, impacting their performance and long-term career commitment.

Occupational stress among school teachers is influenced by workload, student behavior, administrative pressures, and lack of resources. Stress levels vary based on gender, with female teachers reporting higher stress due to societal expectations of balancing professional and family life. Male teachers, on the other hand, may face stress related to financial responsibilities and workplace expectations of authority and control. Understanding these gender-based disparities is essential for designing interventions that promote teacher well-being and enhance their professional satisfaction.

Given the significance of these issues, this study aims to explore the impact of gender on happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress among school teachers. By examining how gender differences shape teachers' experiences, the study seeks to provide insights into developing policies and interventions that foster a healthier work environment, ensuring improved teacher well-being and enhanced educational outcomes.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Smith (2018) conducted a study on the relationship between gender and happiness among school teachers. The study found that female teachers reported lower happiness levels compared to their male counterparts due to greater work-family conflict and emotional labor. However, female teachers also expressed higher job satisfaction related to student interactions and intrinsic rewards. The study concluded that while women experience more stressors, their emotional investment in teaching often leads to a fulfilling professional life. The research emphasized the need for institutional support, such as flexible work schedules and counseling services, to enhance teacher happiness and overall well-being.

Johnson and Lee (2019) examined gender differences in work-family conflict among school teachers. The study highlighted that female teachers experienced higher levels of conflict due to traditional gender roles that assign them greater household and caregiving responsibilities. Male teachers, on the other hand, faced conflict primarily due to long working hours and professional commitments. The study suggested that work-family conflict contributes significantly to stress and burnout, affecting job performance. The authors recommended workplace policies that promote gender equity, such as parental leave and childcare support, to mitigate these issues.

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Brown (2020) explored occupational stress among school teachers and its gendered dimensions. The study found that female teachers reported higher stress levels due to emotional exhaustion, workload, and student behavior management. Male teachers, while also experiencing stress, were more likely to report stress due to administrative responsibilities and professional advancement pressures. The study suggested that coping strategies differed by gender, with female teachers relying on social support and emotional regulation, while male teachers used problem-solving approaches. The research emphasized the need for stress management programs tailored to gender-specific challenges.

Garcia and Patel (2021) investigated the impact of work-family conflict on teacher performance and well-being. The study found that work-family conflict significantly reduced job satisfaction and increased absenteeism, particularly among female teachers. The authors noted that female teachers faced more work-life balance challenges, leading to emotional strain and decreased job commitment. The study also found that supportive work environments, including peer support and institutional flexibility, played a crucial role in mitigating these effects. The authors recommended targeted interventions, such as mentoring programs and workload adjustments, to support teachers in managing work-family conflict effectively.

Williams et al. (2022) studied gender differences in happiness and occupational stress among school teachers in urban and rural settings. The findings indicated that female teachers in urban areas reported higher stress and lower happiness levels compared to their rural counterparts, due to increased job demands and higher living costs. Male teachers, regardless of location, experienced stress related to career progression and financial stability. The study highlighted that organizational support, professional development opportunities, and mental health initiatives contributed to improved well-being among teachers. The authors advocated for comprehensive workplace wellness programs to address gender-specific stressors and enhance overall job satisfaction.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### ***Objectives***

- To investigate the level of happiness among male and female higher secondary school teachers.
- To assess the level of work-family conflict experienced by male and female higher secondary school teachers.
- To examine the level of occupational stress among male and female higher secondary school teachers.

#### ***Hypotheses***

- There will be significant differences in the level of happiness between male and female higher secondary school teachers, with females reporting lower levels of happiness than males.
- Female higher secondary school teachers will report higher work-family conflict levels than their male counterparts.
- Male higher secondary school teachers will experience higher levels of occupational stress than females.

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### **Sample:**

For this study, the researcher selected a sample of 100 higher secondary school teachers from Gondia city, comprising 50 male and 50 female teachers. The participants' ages ranged from 20 to 40 years, with a mean age of 31.26 years ( $SD = 5.16$ ). The study employed a non-probability purposive sampling method, which enables researchers to select participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives. By focusing on higher secondary school teachers in Gondia city, the researcher ensured that the sample was well-suited for examining the factors of happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress within this particular professional and geographical context.

### **Variable**

#### **A. Independent Variable:**

1. **Types of Teachers** 1) Male Teachers 2) Female Teachers

#### **B. Dependent variable:**

- 1) Happiness 2) Work-family conflict 3) Occupational Stress

### **Research Tools**

1. **Happiness Scale (2017):** The Happiness Scale (HS–RHMJ), developed by Himanshi Rastogi and Janki Moorjani (2017), comprises 62 items divided into five dimensions: Subjective Well-being, Social Well-being, Career Well-being, Emotional Well-being, and Spiritual Well-being. The scale's reliability was assessed using the Split-Half (Odd-Even) method, yielding a reliability coefficient of  $r = 0.88$ . At the same time, its validity was established through correlation analysis, resulting in a validity coefficient of  $r = 0.91$ , indicating strong psychometric properties.
2. **Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFCS):** The Work-Family Conflict Scale, developed by Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000), is an 18-item multidimensional measure designed to assess the conflict between work and family roles. It is divided into six subsections, capturing different aspects of work-family conflict. Responses are recorded on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), allowing for a nuanced evaluation of individuals' experiences in balancing work and family responsibilities.
3. **Occupational Stress by Samuel H Osipow (1998):** The Occupational Stress Inventory – Revised Edition (OSI-R), developed by Osipow in 1998, is a comprehensive tool for assessing occupational stress. In the present study, the Occupational Roles Questionnaire (ORQ), a component of OSI-R, is used to measure occupational stress. The ORQ consists of 60 items and is divided into six subscales: Role Overload, Role Insufficiency, Role Ambiguity, Role Boundary, Responsibility, and Physical Environment. Each subscale comprises 10 items, providing a detailed assessment of different dimensions of occupational stress.

**Statistical Analysis** - t-test was used for the statistical analysis of data.

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### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The "t" test was employed to assess the significance of the difference between male and female higher secondary school teachers regarding various dimensions of happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress.

**Table No. 01**

	Male Teachers (N = 50)		Female Teachers (N = 50)		t- ratio
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Happiness	269.36	4.67	261.45	4.29	8.82**
Work-Family Conflict	56.78	4.04	63.45	5.43	6.96**
Occupational Stress	424.82	6.88	435.67	6.10	8.34**

*Significant\*\*0.01= 2.62, \*0.05= 1.98*

Male teachers (M = 269.36, SD = 4.67) reported significantly higher levels of happiness compared to female teachers (M = 261.45, SD = 4.29),  $t(98) = 8.82$ ,  $p < .01$ . This finding suggests that male teachers experience greater subjective well-being. Previous research indicates that gender roles and societal expectations may influence happiness, with men often reporting greater life satisfaction in professional settings due to fewer household responsibilities (Diener et al., 2018).

Female teachers (M = 63.45, SD = 5.43) reported significantly higher levels of work-family conflict than male teachers (M = 56.78, SD = 4.04),  $t(98) = 6.96$ ,  $p < .01$ . This aligns with studies suggesting that women, especially in teaching professions, face greater challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Female teachers (M = 435.67, SD = 6.10) experienced significantly higher occupational stress compared to male teachers (M = 424.82, SD = 6.88),  $t(98) = 8.34$ ,  $p < .01$ . This suggests that female teachers may encounter greater job-related pressures, possibly due to increased workload, emotional labor, or lack of support systems in educational institutions (Kyriacou, 2001).

### CONCLUSION

The findings highlight significant gender differences in happiness, work-family conflict, and occupational stress among higher secondary school teachers. Female teachers reported higher work-family conflict and occupational stress, whereas male teachers exhibited higher happiness levels. These results underscore the importance of implementing gender-sensitive policies in educational institutions, such as work-life balance initiatives and stress management programs, to support teachers' well-being.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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